AN AVERTED TRAGEDY.

Ally Sloper's Half Holiday.

No. 1737 (New Series No. 15). Saturday, 17th February, 1923. TWOPENCE.

WHADDON SHALL HAVE A NEW MASTER.

Poor dear Pa is particularly proud of his title of Friend Of Man. And acts up to it too! when folks get all hot and bothered and fur begins to fly, there he is with a solution ready made, all tacky and ready to patch up the puncture. "It's so simple!" too, is his slogan—as well as Drage's way . . . . Frinstance, that Whaddon Chase Hunting squabble between Lord Dalmeny and Colonel Seeby-Lownes. No sooner did Dad get scent of it than, with a "Yoicks!" "Halloo-o-o!" "Gone away!!!" he was off at a hand gallop. "What was the matter," he queried, "with an amalgamation of the two packs of hounds, the Whaddon and the Wardle?" As for the Mastership, said he would take it himself, appointing Lord Dally and "Old Bill," Assistant Masters, with power to act. Whaddon idea! Whaddon idea!! There ha' peace to a rusty knife! Why the Tweoth is in at the death!!!—TOOTSIE.

READ
BIRDS OF A
FEATHER.

Ally Sloper's Half Holiday.

READ
AN AVERTED
TRAGEDY.

"ALLY SLOPER'S HALF-HOLIDAY."

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———)o(———

When Father Backs a Horse.

Our father's not a betting man,
Although I've heard him say
He knows a system or a plan
That would make betting pay;
But as, to work it properly,
You must be on the course,
It isn't very frequently
That father backs a horse.

But sometimes, when he gets a tip—
What's called a certainty—
He'll say: "I mustn't let this slip,
As it's been given me."
So, out he dashes for the "Star"—
The midday one, of course—
To find out what the runners are
Before he backs the horse.

And that is when the fun begins!
He argues with his mates,
And bets (although he never wins)
On distances and weights.
Then, just before the race is due
He'll suddenly turn cross,
For something will his doubts renew
When father backs a horse!

Then, when the newsboys down the street
Come shouting out like mad,
It's sometimes really quite a treat
To watch our dear old dad!
He grabs a paper, just to scan
The latest from the course,
Then swears!—It's always "also ran"
When father backs a horse!

M.

———)o(———

"How should poets dress?" asks a paragraphist. When calling at this office w. would advise them to wear suits of armour.

———)o(———

WHEN WORDS FAIL.

"If only my pen could utter
The thoughts that arise in me."

TYPES of ENGLISH WOMANHOOD

THE BUSY HOUSE-WIFE.

———)o(———

TRAIN TYPES.

X.—FEEDERS.

OF the many kinds of feeders who infest railway carriages, the nut-eater is undoubtedly the most objectionable.

It is usually the youth of the cheeky type that delights in causing quiet and harmless folks acute discomfort and extreme annoyance.

With pockets bulging with Barcelona nuts, he takes his seat in a compartment, and at once begins his deadly work. Thrusting a nut between his cavernous jaws, he startles his fellow-passengers with its loud explosion. Casting the fragments of empty shell upon the floor, the culprit continues to crack and eats nuts with amazing energy and astonishing speed.

In a few minutes the floor of the carriage assumes the appearance of a pebbly beach; and passengers entering and leaving the compartment punctuate their movements with a crunching tread. The din of the cracking, munching, and crunching almost drowns the noise of the train and renders reading nearly an impossibility.

Next in order of annoyance comes the orange-eater, whose fiendish pleasure it is to fill the compartment with a pungent odour of fruit, and loud sucking noises. The peel is carelessly cast under the seat, or flung from the window, through which, also, pips are explosively spat.

To sit close by the side of an orange-eater in a railway carriage, is, without question, one of life's minor miseries. It is at least a racing certainty that some of the juice will squirt in an unexpected direction, and by no means unlikely that a pip will secrete itself somewhere about one's person.

The sandwich-eater is a comparatively harmless creature, who usually may be credited with possessing good reasons for his action. He causes a minimum of annoyance.

But for the nut-eater, the orange-sucker, the banana-stripper, and one or two other railway nuisances, a special compartment should be provided.

The slightly inebriated gentleman who passes around a whisky bottle, with an urgent invitation to "'ave a wet," does not properly come in the category of travelling "eaters," although he may have bitten many bitters. He is more or less endurable. Sometimes, indeed, he is almost welcome.

The child with face smeared and fingers sticky with chocolate or toffee, is always a trial, and a peril to frocks and trousers, and should be kept strictly under control. But infancy always has an appeal, and in such cases helps us to summon patience and forbearance to our aid.

To sum up, there is a proper place for everything; and a railway compartment, other than a dining car, is most emphatically not the proper place for eating.

———)o(———

Mother: What in the world possessed you to give Mr. Binge a razor?

Daughter: He never seems to realise how tender my face is.

Sloper Songlets.

By "THE BARD."

Bill Higgins in Love.

Deerest Everleaner,
Wot's yer little gime?
I 'aven't gotter deener,
But I loves yer all the sime.
W'en I lies a-dreamin'
In my bed at night
I finks I 'ears yer screamin',
An' wikes up in a fright.

Deerest Everleaner,
Does yer love me? S'y
'As yer ever seen a
Spadger chise a fly?
I'm the bloomin' spadger,
You're the fly I chise.
I'm nullin' but a cadger
For kisses orf yer flce.

Deerest Everleaner,
Will yer meet me, dear?
No one could be keener
Nor this boy wot's 'ere.
Meet me dahn at Victer's
Corfy-shop at 'ight,
I'll tike yer to the pictures,
Everleaner—strite.

Deerest Everleaner,
Will yer be my hown?
I ain't got no demeener
Wuth speakin' of, that's known;
But, deerest, I will love yer
Wiv me bloomin' 'art,
I'll never claht nor shove yer
Till deaf does us part.

Deerest Everleaner,
Don't fergit ster-nite.
I'll mike myself look cleaner,
An' you'll be nice an' bright.
We'll 'ave a cup o' corfy,
An' not a drop we'll spill,
An' you shall 'ave some torfy.
Yer ever luvvin' BILL.

———)o(———

YOU NEVER KNOW, YE KNOW.

"It isn't always safe to judge by appearances, you know."

"Quite true. I once knew a young man who wore a yachting cap, and who really owned a boat."

Which reminds us: many a good son of Caledonia has been taken for a Jew, simply because he owned a Scotch name.

———)o(———

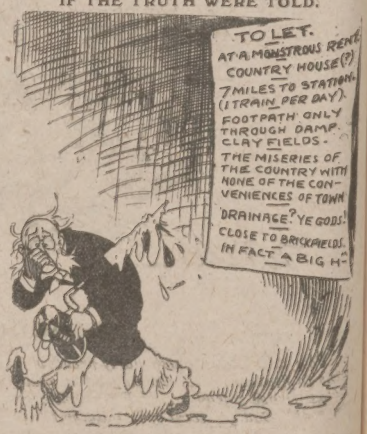
OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF MAIDS AND BUCKLINGS.

Mistress: Jane, you may clear away the breakfast things and put the house in order. I'm going to my dressmaker to have my new gown fitted.

Jane: Yes, ma'am. Are you going to take your latchkey, or shall I sit up for you?

———)o(———

IF THE TRUTH WERE TOLD.



The House-hunter's Dream.

rds of a Feather.

MR. TALBOT CREWE, having successfully negotiated the delicate business of breakfast, combined with luncheon, at his chambers, was strolling leisurely down Bond Street. He turned on the instant when he heard a feminine voice call his name from the roadway, and saw that a carriage had drawn up to the kerb. From within it two ladies looked expectantly towards him—the elder, and more bulky, of whom his glance passed over as speed, to settle upon Leonora.

Mr. Crewe, how do you do?" said Lady Pel- ehusively. "I thought you were going to pass spite of my vocal efforts."

ear lady," Crewe hastened to remark, "now think so? When the voice of the siren——" of artistically, and endeavoured to catch glance. She, however, after a smile of gazed idly towards the opposite side of the d his hopes, which had risen to a dangerous toppled down again headlong.

, after that," said Lady Pelkington, in ele- playfulness, "I can do no less than offer you. Which way are you going?"

is extremely kind," said Talbot Crewe, with essement, as he entered and took the vacant Leonora. "A lonely bachelor, you know, hither and thither——! As for my ultimate n, it matters not. I am content to travel by side," he added sotto, for Leonora's ears. kington did not hear this last remark, but evertheless. It was an irritating custom o

ora, dear child, wanted to see that new piece at the Novelty," she explained somewhat y; "so we are en route for a matinee there oment. I hate matinees myself. One has to over one's lunch!"

rned and began to give rambling—and appar- eruous—instructions to a bored-looking chauf- albot Crewe seized upon the opportunity by o Leonora.

n in disgrace for some reason, it seems?" he in a downcast tone.

t makes you think so, Mr. Crewe?" said the ly.

welcome," he suggestd; "the fact that last er having promised me a dance——"

d a headache," said Leonora quickly, "and ."

luck is certainly out," he complained de- y. "And after I had been looking forward vening—but I'm sorry," he broke off hastily. —

yes," declared Leonora lightly, "it has dis- by now, thanks."

you are alone this afternoon?" he queried, orward eagerly. "I mean are you to make a

we are quite alone." She looked towards him. ly.

do you think, if I stop here until we get to re, your estimable mother will think of asking in you?"

might," the girl admitted sedately, though estion of a twinkle in her eye gave him "One never knows what mother is going to

chance it!" he declared. "And what is the forget for the moment."

Cosmopolitan Girl,'" Leonora informed him. course, I'm not going on purpose to see that, at in the second act the girl who plays the t wears a tea-gown which is absolutely——!" was very impressive, even to a male ear.

put in Lady Pelkington serenely, as the car "it is humiliating to confess it, but one can up ideas in this way."

yet people talk of the degeneracy of the looked Talbot Crewe. "No wonder the costu- me is printed large on every programme!"

n response to his recent plaint, events turned had planned.

pe we are not taking you out of your way?" Pelkington presently, as they turned into .

not at all," he hastened to assure her. "Any time," and then adroitly broke into an ani- scussion upon the organisation of charity which occupied Lady Pelkington until they he theatre.

aps you'll come in with us, then?" she re- ton-committingly; "unless you have seen the re"

ing would please me more," said Mr. Crewe, nded the ladies out. "It's sure to be changed ognition since I saw it last. You had better for me, though, I think," he advised. "I have to see about a seat, of course. By the way, what numbers are yours?"

Lady Pelkington, after an exhaustive search in a microscopic reticule, discovered the truant tickets. "B7 and 8," she announced at last. "I think, after all, we'll stop just here, Mr. Crewe. You cannot be more than a few minutes." And rustling across with Leonora in her wake, she took her seat upon a lounge on the other side of the extensive foyer.

A small crowd was collected round the box-office; and Mr. Talbot Crewe leisurely took his place in the line. The first three applicants—a party of Americans invading London, who apparently required a box, but on hearing its price translated into dollars, hastily demurred—were soon attended to; and as only one now remained before his turn came, Mr. Crewe thrust his hand into his pocket in readiness.

Next moment he withdrew it with a start, and sought his waistcoat pockets in turn, his face mean time expressing the utmost consternation.

"Great Scot!" he almost gasped aloud, "I've come out without a single penny piece!"

The full force of the discovery paralysed him for a moment. An instant later, however, he recognised that something must be done, and that speedily. Glancing across towards the lounge, he saw that the ladies were gazing in another direction at some new arrivals, and had not noticed his palpable expression of dismay.

"Whatever am I to do?" he asked himself wildly. "It's an absurd—a ridiculous position, but it's got to be faced. It would take quite half an hour to taxi back again; and besides, I couldn't—it's out of the question! They would perhaps take my card, now——" He felt in his breast pocket hastily. "Oh, of course, misfortunes never come singly! I've left my pocket-book behind as well. Ah! Smithson, my good fellow, I'm afraid you'll lose your situation over this business!" He addressed an imaginary valet sternly. "How often have I told you to run carefully over every item?"

The fussy old gentleman in front of him was laying down his money. Talbot Crewe mentally blessed him for arguing at length about the correctness of the change, for it afforded him further time for thought.

"The only solution I can see is to try and get in free," he told himself rapidly. "I suppose it is often done, but the question is—how? As an actor? I'm afraid I hardly look the part; and besides, there would surely be awkward questions."

"I'll see if it can be managed. We don't generally issue Press tickets for matinees, you see. I'll ask my chief, though—Mr. Prescott. What name shall I say?"

"Er—I've unfortunately come out without my card-case," Mr. Crewe informed him airily, "but still that won't matter. Mr. Prescott is sure to know me." The name for which he was searching his memory suddenly came into his mind. "Say it's Mr. Barfield," he instructed, "Mr. Barfield of the Current News."

"Certainly, sir," said the attendant briskly. "Here, boy!" he called behind him for a messenger; "take this message to Mr. Prescott immediately. Sorry to keep you waiting for a while," he said apologetically. "But, you understand, I'm a newcomer here, and so——"

"Oh, don't mention it," said Mr. Crewe nonchalantly. "Just as well to take precautions."

He politely gave place at the window to the next comer in the line, and withdrew a few paces, carefully refraining from a glance towards the lounge. It required considerable courage to stand his ground until the boy returned. Never had the dusty street outside seemed so inviting a haven. He prepared to receive the news, however, when it came, with a bold front.

"Now, sir, I shall be pleased to oblige you," said the attendant cordially. "Mr. Prescott said that your editor is here this afternoon—Mr. Gerrison, I think, was the name he mentioned. Luckily, too, the stall I am able to allot you is next to his. Mr. Prescott has already let him know you are here." This second staggering development was almost too much for even Mr. Crewe's sang froid. He rallied only with a supreme effort.

"Oh, I had no idea," he stammered, truthfully enough. "But, if you don't mind, I should like to be near 'B7 and 8.' Some friends of mine, you see—if it's not troubling you too much?"

"'G8'—the one I mentioned—is the only seat I can manage, sir. It is immediately behind your friend. Mr. Gerrison has 'G9'."

"Ah, yes; thank you so much," said Talbot Crewe faintly. He took the ticket, which the other held out to him, mechanically, and turned aside as one in a dream.

"The game's up," he muttered despairingly. Then the humorous side of the affair struck him suddenly, and he as nearly as possible burst into a fit of uproarious merriment. Controlling himself with difficulty, he approached the ladies.

"Not another word! You may rely on me."

But just as the old gentleman moved away there entered his head an idea which astonished him by his brilliance.

"The very thing!" he muttered exultantly. It'll be fine sport to bluff it through. By Jove, too!—the fellow in the pay-box is new to me. What luck!" He stepped forward confidently.

"Is there anything new lately" he inquired casually. "I mean, has there been any change made in the show during the last week or so"

"Certainly, sir," the suave individual assured him through the window. "In the first act there are several extra songs, and in the second Miss Gaylight has a new dance with chorus, I understand. Also, for another thing——"

"Thanks; that's what I wanted. I represent 'Current News,' you know," remarked Mr. Crewe pleasantly. "I suppose you could let me have a seat?"

"Well," said the box-office attendant, doubtfully, "I think it would be best if you were to go on to your seats, Lady Pelkington," he suggested casually. "I am trying to get one near to them, if possible. I will follow in a few minutes, but I don't want you to miss any of the piece."

"Very well," said Lady Pelkington promptly. "What a nuisance these people are, Mr. Crewe! Come, Leonora."

"I shall not be very long," he assured the girl, as, walking away, she flashed a look over her shoulder. He waited some five minutes, until, as he thought, the play had commenced.

But a second after the officious programme girl, taking his ticket abruptly, had hurried off in front in the direction of the third row, he recognised that he had been misled by the overture—a medley of songs out of the piece itself. The curtain was not yet up.

He mentally admitted, now, that his boats were burnt; and followed the attendant doggedly. Coming

to the seat she had turned down in readiness, he ensconced himself therein, gradually settling into a comfortable posture. Then, before making his presence known to Lady Pelkington and Leonora, under cover of his programme he scanned his neighbours furtively.

On the left hand a lady sheltered herself behind a triumph in headgear; he turned abruptly in the other direction. There sat a middle-aged man with a grey beard, who, to Talbot Crewe's dismay, was engaged in eyeing him from top to toe. For the first time in his life the latter experienced the sensations of a prisoner in the dock. Catching the grey-bearded man's eye, he tried to make some remark—he knew not what—but his tongue clave to his mouth. The next instant his neighbour made a motion as if to rise, but, apparently, changing his mind, sat down again.

"He's going to expose me," thought Mr. Crewe resignedly. "Ah, well, sooner or later it's got to happen."

Out of the corner of his eye he could see that the grey-bearded man still gazed in his direction. Mr. Crewe, turning to meet his glance defiantly, even caught him in the act of smiling, and felt slightly relieved.

With a show of jaunty indifference which he was far from feeling, he leaned forward, and spoke to Lady Pelkington.

"Oh, you've managed it, then?" she commented over her shoulder. "Did you exchange with somebody, or was this seat vacant?"

Talbot Crewe breathed a silent thanksgiving that she had not addressed him by name. "It was vacant, Lady Pelkington," he said hastily, in a somewhat louder tone than the occasion required.

It was after a peaceful interval that, chancing to glance towards the centre gangway, he noted with some apprehension that a uniformed attendant was standing opposite his row, scanning in turn the faces of its occupants with a fixed, inquiring glare.

"By Jove! I wonder if they suspect?" he muttered to himself. "Is this the end of everything? Confound the fellow!—what's he staring at me for? Oh, of course!" he thought on the instant, "I'm a reporter. How could I have forgotten it? What ought I to do now? Take notes, I believe, is the usual thing. Let me see, what will do duty for a note-book? My programme . . . and here's a pencil."

He began to scribble hastily in the margin, occupying himself thus for several minutes.

"Ah! I thought so," he told himself triumphantly, on plucking up courage to look up again. "He's gone now. Talbot, my boy, you've more brains than I ever suspected!"

Suddenly he became aware that the grey-bearded man, leaning forward towards him, was speaking close to his ear. He awoke from his dream of self-appreciation with a start.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the grey-bearded man, slowly, "but I think we must have met before. Do you mind—would it be too much to ask you to tell me your name?"

He turned his head slowly, and eyed his interrogator with an air of studied calmness. "My name," he whispered back, watching the other's face, "is Barfield."

"Oh, surely not?" the grey-bearded man queried politely. The corners of his mouth twitched. "Really, sir, I fancy——"

"Well, of course there is no use in trying to continue the deception before **you**, Mr. Gerrison," said Talbot Crewe hesitatingly. "My only course is to throw myself on your mercy, and ask you not to expose me." Some enthusiasts behind them, indignant at even this low-voiced converse, uttered a warning "Sh-h!" expressive of their disapproval.

"I had to get in somehow," explained Mr. Crewe haltingly. "My friends here. . . Oh, **you** understand! The fact is I came out without any money——" He hesitated. "You see the circumstances. You won't give me away?"

A choking noise came from the grey-bearded man's direction. "Not another word," he whispered after an interval. "You may rely upon me." He held out his hand in the gloom, and Mr. Crewe pressed it fervently. Before turning his attention again to the stage, the latter scrawled his name and address on a corner torn from the programme, and passed it along. The grey-bearded man acknowledged its receipt with a nod and a smile.

All through the second half of the strange medley upon the stage—"The Cosmopolitan Girl" was described by the management by that conveniently inclusive term, "musical comedy,"—Mr. Crewe was silently deliberating how to express in a suitable manner his acknowledgements of so strange, and yet so welcome, a favour. It was not until the medley entered into what was unmistakably its closing phase that he dared to brave both an attentive public's opprobrium and a possibly cool reception from Mr. Gerrison himself, by addressing the grey-bearded man anew.

"I want to thank you for your kindly action," he whispered, touching his neighbour's shoulder; "for your consideration to a total stranger. I assure you I am very grateful; and if," he continued jerkily, "at any time there is anything I can do in return, you may rely upon me——"

"Pray don't mention it, my dear sir," said his companion briskly, raising his voice slightly as the curtain fell on the finale, to the accompaniment of audible appreciation from the pit and gallery. "As for 'giving you away,' as you express it, I should never have thought of it for a moment. But—your friends——" He glanced in the direction of Lady Pel-

(Concluded in col. 3.)

The Head Waiter

AND H.R.H. THE DUKE OF YORK.

A FLUTTER of excitement shook the old chop-house from cellar to garret.

One of the journalistic gents who frequent the bar had repeated a rumour he had heard to the effect that it was the intention of the Duke of York to lunch there that day.

* * * * *

But the Head Waiter remained unperturbed—even when a young gentleman, who certainly bore a striking resemblance to the Duke, made his appearance in the dining-room, while a curious crowd gazed at him through the window from outside.

"Taking lunch, sir?" he asked.

"Yes," was the reply. "But I want no fuss of any sort, please. Treat me like an ordinary customer."

"Certainly, sir," returned the Head Waiter. "That was my intention. As for fuss—well, the only time there's any fuss in this establishment is when one of them journalist gents you can see swapping yarns and fairy tales in the bar there, kicks up a row because his half tankard isn't full to the brim. What would you like, sir? The beef pudding is A1 to-day. I've just had some meself."

* * * * *

"There's a curious lot outside in the court this morning, sir—pressing their noses against the window-panes. I've an idea they're looking at you," observed the Head Waiter, deftly folding a clean table-napkin.

"I expect they are," laughed the customer. "I don't like it, but I suppose I must put up with it. One of the penalties of being born in the purple, you know."

The Head Waiter looked closely at the speaker for a moment.

"So the rumour was right, your Highness?" he said. "As a rule, the tales them journalist gents tell come out of their own heads. But one of them seems to have told the truth for once. He ought to see a doctor."

* * * * *

While the customer tackled his pudding with a healthy appetite, the Head Waiter ventured to engage him in conversation.

"If I might, your Highness," he began, "I would like to congratulate you on your engagement. It is a matter for satisfaction that you are not going abroad for your bride, and I hope your brother, the Prince of Wales, will follow your example."

"He can please himself," replied his Highness.

"But what I don't like," continued the Head Waiter, "is all this impertinent fuss a certain section of the Press are making about what, after all, is your private affair."

"Neither do I," was the retort.

"Some of the papers have gone so far," proceeded the Head Waiter, "as to more or less belittle your elder brother as compared with yourself, although it is not long since they were beslavering him with fulsome compliments. It don't seem right."

"It isn't," was the reply. "But it merely amuses us."

* * * * *

"One writer went so far as to say," proceeded the Head Waiter, "that you beat the Prince in all sports, although he is so anxious to excel. What do you think of that, sir?"

"Utter tosh," was the impatient reply. "There may be some things I do better than he, but there are a lot I do a great deal worse. We are just human beings, all said and done, and are no more perfect than anyone else. Bring me some cheese, please, and a pint of bitter in a tankard."

* * * * *

The Head Waiter proceeded to the service bar, where he overheard a journalistic gent express the intention to interview the Duke.

"Excuse me, sir," interposed the Head Waiter, "but you'll do nothing of the sort while I'm waiting on his Highness. You leave the Duke be. He's had quite enough of you journalist gents since his engagement was announced. There's some outside—who haven't been able to bite anybody's ear this morning, I suppose—nearly pushing their faces through the dining-room window—to see what he can do with a pint of bitter, I suppose."

* * * * *

A roar of laughter followed him back to the Duke.

"You've got some merry customers there," observed his Highness.

"It's them journalist gents," explained the Head Waiter. "I've just been telling some of them off."

"Well, they seem to have enjoyed it."

"Yes, your Highness. That's the worst of them writers. They are never serious, except the day before pay-day, when they go round from pub to pub, peeping into bars for one another."

The Duke laughed.

"I think I should like to know some of those fellows," he said. "They sound jolly."

Again a hurricane of laughter blew in from the bar.

"They're teaching the parrot some new bad words, I expect," explained the Head Waiter.

* * * * *

A few minutes later he bowed out the Duke—like himself, well-satisfied. And the flattened faces removed themselves from the dining-room window.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER (Continued from col. 1).

kington and Leonora, who had risen, and were making preparations for departure. Seeing Mr. Crewe in conversation with the stranger, they began leisurely to move towards the gangway.

"Don't let me keep you," said the grey-bearded man, hastily. "I merely wished to say that I should never have taken extreme measures. For one thing—well—I've been young myself, and can understand. Another reason is that, for several minutes, and he chuckled amusedly, "I was in deadly fear that **you** would expose me!"

"That I——?" Mr. Crewe's voice expressed his complete astonishment.

"Yes," said the other lightly. "That is, until I remembered having seen Mr. Barfield's portrait somewhere. . . . He is a much older man than you are; it was rather foolish to take his name," he said paternally, in parenthesis. "But, pardon me, you are still in the dark? The case can be stated in a nutshell. I am no more Mr. Gerrison, the editor of that estimable paper, 'Current News,' than you are his dramatic critic!" He made this portentous announcement gravely, but his eyes twinkled.

"Really?" Mr. Crewe gasped. "But, still, I do not

"Your friends must be waiting; I will be brief," the grey-bearded man assured him. "The fact is that, see——"

While travelling on the Tube this morning, I found an envelope addressed to him, containing a 'Press' ticket for his use. The date of this I altered, having somewhat of a passion for theatres—which, I regret to say, my limited income cannot altogether gratify—and so," he finished abruptly, with a wave of the hand, "I am here."

"By Jove!" said Talbot Crewe softly.

Talbot Crewe pulled himself together with an effort, and, hurrying towards the foyer, where the ladies awaited him, somehow stammered a hurried apology.

"Ah, yes; business, of course," remarked Lady Pelkington, dismissing the subject gracefully. "But now, as a penalty, you must see us home. The car should be waiting somewhere."

"Why, delighted, I'm sure!" said Crewe fervently. He had been prepared to bolt at the mere mention of a taxi.

"You are in high spirits, all of a sudden!" remarked Leonora lightly, glancing at his face, wreathed in smiles.

"I am glad, because the piece is over!" Creme declared boisterously. "You don't know the tortures I have been undergoing—away from you."

"But I don't understand. I thought it delightful," she protested. "Oh! but, of course, you've seen all before!"

As they waited in a group at the theatre entrance the grey-bearded man, issuing from some obscure exit, passem them by. He smiled at Talbot Crewe, and, raising his hat, bowed and hurried away.

"Who is it?" asked Lady Pelkington, with faint interest. She scanned his retreating form through her lorgnette. "His face seemed somehow familiar."

"That," said Mr. Crewe slowly, "is a great friend of mine. In fact, I might say that we are boon companion—or, rather, birds of a feather!"

"You speak in parables. What is his name" persisted Lady Pelkington. "Ah, here is the car at last!"

"I regret to say, Lady Pelkington," said Talbot Crewe seriously, as he assisted Leonora to her seat, "I extremely regret to say that I have no idea!"

———:o:———

Friend: There's your friend, Miss MacGregor, over there. Why don't you go over and speak to her?

Scot: Wheest, mon; she has na paid her fare yet.

BY THE FIRESIDE.

Hello! Hello!!--'Ullo!!

THROUGH to a call office? Oh! yes, Exchange, I know who it is! . . . Do hurry her up! She's put in two pennies and now the third one's got stuck! . . . Exchange, do tell her to turn the handle properly . . . Hold—on! there you are, Lardi! I knew it was you! Yes, I know what you are ringing about. . . . Yes, you want to know if I went to the sales and got what you asked me to get, don't you? (By-the-bye, ma cherie, I really don't think that a bad corn was enough excuse to keep you from going yourself!—also, I may mention, you wouldn't have corns if you didn't wear shoes half a size too small for you! You really ought to take 6½ instead of 6—oh! sorry!—it's "5," is it? I'd forgotten—I only know that I take "3's," which is rather useful in trying to get bargains, because small sizes always go more cheaply because fewer people want 'em—ahem!!

* * * * *

Well, now, if you care to listen patiently, I'll tell you the whole and full story of my visit to Croaker's, Hunter's, and Helliweg's sales. (Yes, pull down the transmitter, stand on your mull, rest your elbow on this money-box, and you'll be quite comfy! Never mind if an elderly gent is standing outside, glaring and waiting for the 'phone! Let him stand and glare and wait—it's bound to do him good!)

* * * * *

Now, which of the advertised goods was it that you asked me to get? Oh! yes, I've got the list here! Let's see—er—er—oh! yes, three lace-trimmed and ribbon-threaded camisoles at 10 ¾d.—four pairs of artificial silk stockings at 2s. 4½d.—twelve reels of cotton at 3d.—one paper knife, 4½d.—one aluminium saucepan at 1s. 1½d.—one fur coat at 17s. 9d.—one plumed hat at 1s. ½d.—two dozen "Government" blankets at 6s. 6d. (I don't know if that meant 6s. 6d. each or 6s. 6d. the dozen)—4 packets of needles at 1d.—three pairs of—er—well, I had better not say any more over the 'phone!

* * * * *

Anyhow, I've got the list here, and now I'll tell you what I did about it.

* * * * *

I took six pounds of my own to spend, also the three pounds which you gave me—so, with nine quidlets in my handbag, off I trotted to the realm of shops.

* * * * *

But when I arrived everything seemed hopeless. All three stores were packed with seething, struggling, panting masses of feminine humanity, and outside in the street and half across the road they still seethed and struggled and panted.

* * * * *

However, being of a bright and fearless nature—(beg pardon, dearie, wad-jer-say?)—yes, being of a bright and fearless nature, I made up my mind that I wouldn't be "done"; so, after pushing one fat lady under a horse's legs and hurling one thin lady into the gutter, I struggled and kicked and pummelled my way through the cursing crowd, and got inside Croaker's first door.

* * * * *

This was the trimming department, and just as I had picked up a length of sequin insertion (marked a farthing cheaper than it would have been at ordinary times) a beastly hag with a nose like a shovel, tore it from me and yelled:

"Thank you all the same, that's mine! A nice sort of lady trying to take what belongs to another lady!"

* * * * *

And, with that, she shoved so violently that I fell back, and must have fallen if a strong arm hadn't supported me.

* * * * *

I then looked up and saw an absolutely sweet, kind face bending over me. (Oh! Lardi, such blue eyes!—such a pretty mouth topped by the dinkiest thing in teeney-weeney close-cut moustaches!—such a charming, sympathetic, yet quite naughty-boy smile!)

* * * * *

"Do let me help you! You aren't strong enough to battle with all these female hooligans!" he said, pressing me quite tenderly to his nice sturdy chest.

"You are kind!" I replied, helping him along with the pressing act.

"Only too glad to be of use!"

"But how can you help me?"

"Well, I suggest that you let me show you the bargains, carry the parcels for you, and fight the way clear for you to reach the counters. Between us, I'm sure some real bargains can be secured.

* * * * *

So I thanked him, and then we began.

* * * * *

And he certainly was wonderful at spotting the best value for money, and though I didn't buy exactly what I intended to buy, I undoubtedly did secure some bargains.

* * * * *

F'rinstance, splendid silk pyjamas which he advised me to buy for Pa—also some smart shirts—a fine travelling rug—a flask—leather suit-case—ladie's georgette nighties (such transparent dreams!), and an ivory comb which he said seemed made for me.

And so strong and capable he was in carrying every parcel, and not allowing anything to be sent—and if he hadn't held the purchases while I went to the desks and paid, I could never have got on at all.

The things I just mentioned about finished up my £6—in fact, I really spent more than that—and then we set out to get your odds and ends.

* * * * *

Of course, this wasn't easy, because most of the bargains, which you had seen advertised in the evening papers, had been snapped up; but we fought and scrambled and kicked with splendid vigour until—er—well, anyhow, until your £3 was spent!—and, my dear, to the very best advantage (I got three pairs and they were really sweet! Trimmed with lovely lace insertion threaded with mauve ribbon!!)

* * * * *

"Well, you have been kind!" I said, when we had come to the end of our task.

"A labour of love is never kindness," he replied, looking into my eyes so thrillingly. "And now," he continued, "would it be too daring to ask if I may see you home in a taxi, and perhaps, afterwards—we—er—well, may I call a taxi?"

* * * * *

I said that he might, so—after telling me to stay where I was—the poor parcel-laden "knut" darted out of one of the big swing doors.

* * * * *

I waited.

* * * * *

I went on waiting.

* * * * *

I continued to go on waiting.

* * * * *

And—er—well, my dear, he never came back!!!

* * * * *

The young man and more than £9 worth of carefully-selected sale bargains had vanished!!!

* * * * *

Nasty jar, wasn't it?

* * * * *

Ah! yes, I thought you'd begin nagging about that £3! Well, I don't think I do owe it to you—it was your risk as much as mine!—certainly, it wasn't because I

Oh, well, if you're going to talk like that, the best thing I can do is to cut it off!

* * * * *

No, Exchange, thank you—don't put me back! I've had enough of her for one day!

* * * * *

Mean, ungrateful cat!

———)o(———

"He was capable of carrying every parcel."

TIME IS MONEY.

"When you were at lunch," said the Fleet Street office boy to his employer, "Mr. Augustus Earbiter called and wanted to borrow a quid."

"Aha!" cried the old man cheerily. "Talk about the old saying, 'Time is money!' To be out twenty minutes is equal to being in twenty shillings."

———)o(———

THE POINT OF VIEW.

"It all depends on the point of view," he said reflectively.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Well, by the way of illustration," he answered, "there's Mrs. Gabbit next door who sings all day long. Looking at it from one point of view we say, 'Happy woman!' and from another, 'Unhappy neighbours!'"

———)o(———

BREAKING IT GENTLY.

A stranger approached the cyclist in the darkness. "Beg pardon," he said, "your beacon has ceased its ordinary avocation."

"I beg your pardon."

"Your illuminator, I perceive, is shrouded in complete oblivion."

"Eh? 'Who's a——?'"

"The effulgence of your radiator has evanesced."

"And so will you, if—'ere, wotcher mean?"

"The transversal ether oscillations in you incandenser have been temporarily discontinued."

Just then a small boy shouted, "Hi, mate, yer blinkin' lamp's aht!"

THE LAUGH ON HIM.

Mr. Jones had recently become the father of twins. The minister stopped him in the street to congratulate him.

"Well, Jones," he said, "I hear that the Lord has smiled on you."

"Smiled on me?" replied Jones. "He laughed out aloud."

———)o(———

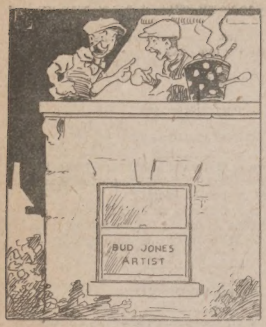
He has been going with a girl for a long time, but though he had faced the terrors of the trenches, yet he still hesitated.

"Dearest," said the girl finally, "didn't you once say that you would do anything for me? Didn't you once ask me to put your devotion to the test?"

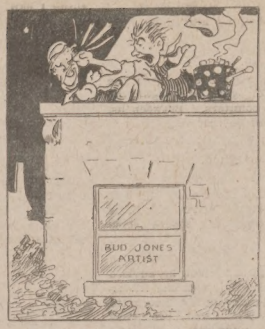
"Indeed, I did," he responded warmly. "There is nothing in the world I would not do, no sacrifice I would not make to prove to you how much I think of you."

"Well, then," said the practical maid, "ask me to marry you. We've fooled about long enough."

ALLY SLOPER'S HALF-HOLIDAY.



The plumbers on the roof were having a terrible row,



And it led up to a terrible fight.

Somehow they knocked over their fire, when Bud Jones was looking out.

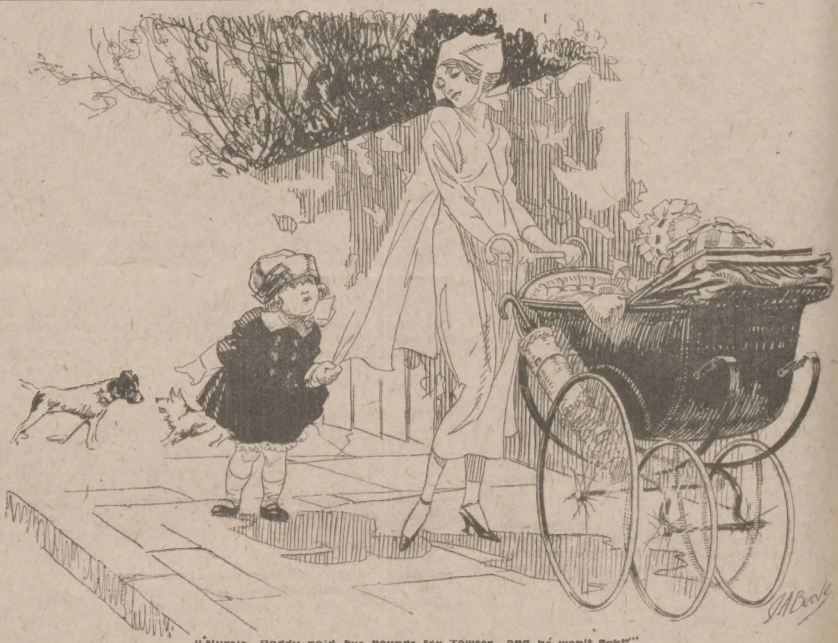
With the result that he got the worst of it.

THE CLUB TEMPERANCE CRANK: And what would be the result if all the public-houses were at the bottom of the sea?
THE JOVIAL ONE: A deuce of a lot of people would be drowned—what?

HOST: Yes, sir; this is one of the of the oldest inns in the country.
TRAVELLER: And so is this cheese, I should say.

"It's all right, lady, he always does the 'fox-trot' when he hears a band."

LITTLE MISS WINTER

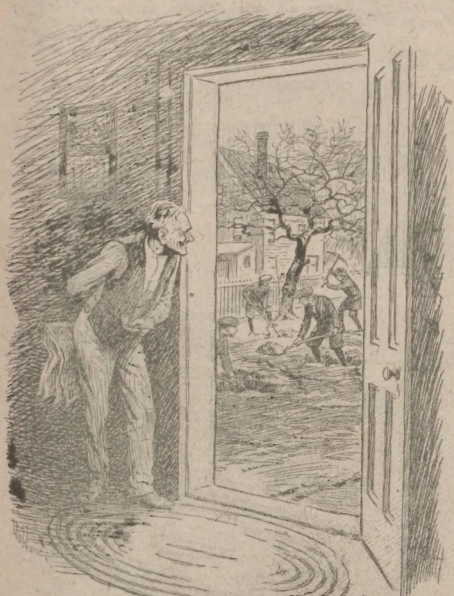


"Nursie, Daddy paid five pounds for Towser, and he won't fight"

ALLY SLOPER'S HALF-HOLIDAY.

HOW GREAT MEN GET THERE.—H.R.H THE DUKE OF YORK.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF YORK was born at York Cottage, Sandringham, in 1895. In January, 1909, he entered the Royal Naval College, Osborne, and passed on to Dartmouth. In September, 1913, he joined H.M.S. "Collingwood" as Midshipman, and was so serving when the Great War broke out. Present at the Battle of Jutland, he was eventually transferred to the "Malaya," where he became a Lieutenant. Invalided out of the Fleet, owing to bad health, H.R.H. joined the R.A.F. in 1917, and qualified for a Pilot at Cranwell. He is a good dancer, rides well to hounds, keen on golf, tennis, polo, and racquets. His recent engagement to Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, daughter of the Earl of Strathmore, leaves the Empire anxious for further news—in the spring.



When it's time to dig the garden, Uncle Henry starts a rumour about a mysterious box his grandfather buried.

THE LIGHT OF THE HAREM.

A hourr out of Paradise Were scarcely nicer, if as nice!

"HUNT SUIT."

"Hi, guvnor! Your garter's coming dahn!"

Ghosts Seen By Sloper.

THE WHITE LADY OF PURBERRY HALL, AND HOW MRS. SLOPER LAID THE UNHAPPY SPIRIT.

"I ONCE stayed at a house," said the Sage of Shoe Lane, "which had the reputation of being haunted by a 'White Lady.'

"My host's family had been afflicted for more than three centuries by a particularly malignant sprite of this description.

"In the reign of the 'Virgin Queen' it happened that the then head of the Purberry family willed all his money to his unmarried sister, the Lady Alice Purberry. His reason for doing so was that his only son was a young rip whose carryings on were a scandal to the neighbourhood.

"Greatly to his chagrin he, as Purberry Hall and the estate were entailed, could not deprive his heir from inheriting them. He did the next worse thing, however. Although old Purberry was a very rich man, he raised all the money he could on mortgages, handed the cash to his sister, and died happy in the certainty that his son would succeed to an ancient hall and broad acres, and not a bean in coin of the realm.

"One of the conditions of the will was that the Lady Alice should reside at Purberry Hall and afflict her nephew with her ugly maid servants. As a result, young Purberry had a terrible time after he inherited the hall.

"His aunt, who developed miserly habits, would provide nothing for dinner but herrings and porridge; until at last, in desperation, he married the local poacher's daughter in order that her father, out of pity for his offspring, might, every now and then, send them some game for their table.

"At last she was seized with a mortal illness. Just before she breathed her last she sent for her nephew and said: 'Jasper, in accordance with your father's wish, I have kept you without money. You will soon be very rich. You will find all my gold and jewels hidden at—at—' here she was seized with a fearful fit of coughing and expired before she could complete the sentence!

"Needless to say, Jasper Purberry searched the old hall from cellar to attic and dug out the grounds without finding the slightest trace of the hidden treasure.

"To add to his troubles, the ghost of his wicked old aunt, clad in a white robe de nuit, took to rambling about her former habitation.

"This was the substance of the tale the nineteenth century representative of the Purberrys, who was on the Stock Exchange, told me. He added that he had three times seen the ghost of the spiteful old spinster, and announced that he intended to form a syndicate with a small capital to systematically explore the hall and grounds for the treasure, the value of which he estimated at £250,000.

"I was invited to join the syndicate and come in on the ground floor, so to speak. That night I had a most awesome and eerie adventure. I was awakened from my beauty sleep by the pressure of an icy hand upon my forehead, and beheld, to my unspeakable awe and astonishment, the apparition of the 'White Lady' of Purberry Hall standing by the head of my bed.

"To my inexpressible relief, the ghost waved its draperies like a serpentine dancer and glided out of the room.

"At breakfast the conversation turned upon the 'White Lady' and the hidden treasure. I told them of the apparition I had witnessed.

"'Now, Sloper, my boy,' said Purberry, 'you have seen for yourself the spectre of Lady Alice. You had better join me in finding the hidden treasure at once!'

"All that day I spent with Purberry exploring the grounds, which were surrounded with an ancient wall of surprising thickness, and which, Purberry declared, should be pulled down brick by brick until the treasure was found.

"When I went to bed at night, after a convivial evening, I was awakened as before by the pressure of a cold, clammy hand on my forehead, and again beheld the apparition of the 'White Lady,' who, as before, turned and proceeded to glide out of the room.

"I was about to follow the spectre when my arm was seized by Mrs. Sloper, who whispered, 'Lie still, Ally, and see what happens!'

"A moment later we heard in the corridor a piercing scream, followed by the sound of someone hopping on one leg.

"'Come along and see the ghost,' said Mrs. Sloper, striking a match and lighting the candle! I rushed into the corridor, followed by my better half; and there I saw Mrs. Purberry in her night dress, standing on one leg, leaning against the wall, while she endeavoured to extract a long tin-tack from the sole of her other foot.

"When she saw us she screamed again and hopped into her own room.

"'That will l'arn her,' said Mrs. Sloper. 'I planted tacks with their business ends upwards for the "ghost" when I heard the tale. Ally, you're as soft as a boiled turnip! The ghost walked in order that her husband would walk off with your money—if any!'"

"Why were you in your stockinged feet?"
"Because I'd heard there was sickness in the family."

LORD BOB'S WEEKLY INDISCRETION.

I AM, naturally, dear chappies, the most peaceful of men. I don't mind admitting that while I was in the Army (like all of us, or nearly all) I wanted the war to end as quickly as possible, so long as we won.

Being likewise a candid sort of fellow, I have never disguised my opinions, and it is perhaps because of this fact that Charlie Crowhard made a little mistake. The little mistake aforesaid happened last Friday (an unlucky day), when Charlie said several rude things to me at the Grayson's dance because he thought that I had been kissing his girl.

As a matter of fact, Charlie was entirely wrong. I had not attempted to kiss his girl. It was a case of mistaken identity, so to speak. But when I tried to explain matters to Charlie, as well as I could, he refused to listen, and expressed his intention of giving me a good hiding. Now I always maintain, dear chappies, that before you promise a fellow a good hiding, you must be pretty sure that you can deliver the goods. I have been caught that way and that's why I am careful.

As Charlie persisted in his determination, I ended by suggesting that he should put the gloves on on the following evening at Bashley's Gym. And Charlie, who fancies himself a boxer, leaped at the idea. He informed me that he intended to make a sad mess of me and push my nose round the back of my ear, and so on. To all of which I said nothing, but thought a lot.

The next evening Charlie brought up about a couple of dozen of his pals to see me "through the hoop." One of these was a johnny named Durrant, whose face when he saw me, was a picture. He immediately walked up to Charlie and whispered long and earnestly into that young gentleman's ear. The consequence was Charlie's face, which, up to then, had breathed exceeding joy and conf., took suddenly the expression of a fellow who had just discovered that his bookie is missing after backing a 20 to 1 winner.

Then Charlie walked over to me, and, in words that seemed to come out with much difficulty, he babbled:

"Er—I—er—I want to apologise for yesterday. I was mistaken. I can see it now. Very sorry—er—good-night!"

And Charlie promptly hooked it—never waiting for me to say a word.

* * * * *

Of course, everybody who had come to see the "fun" (and particularly Charlie's pals, who were extremely annoyed) was disappointed, and Charlie got severely blamed.

It all seemed very strange and mysterious to most people, but I think the explanation was quite simple. That johnny, Durrant, was the man I had met two years before the war in the semi-final of the amateur light-weight championship.

After all, dear chappies, as you will agree, it doesn't follow that because a man is peaceful by nature and inclination that he is unable to use his "dukes."

Charlie Crowhard, anyway, isn't likely to forget this.

SHE (after their honeymoon): Will you love me just as much when I am dead?
HE (absently): More, darling, more.

Ally Sloper's Back-Chat Artistes.

BRAG AND BOUNCE.

"HELLO, old sport! My word, but you do look worried."

"Yes. I've just been to the police-court to get a warrant for my wife's arrest."

"On what charge?"

"Rocking me to sleep."

"But you can't have your wife arrested for rocking you to sleep."

"Can't I? You should see the rock!"

"Ah! That's why you look so seedy. How are you feeling now?"

"Well, I'm better than I was before I was as bad as I feel now."

"H'm! Hadn't you better see Doctor Patchett?"

"Do you think he can cure me?"

"Yes. He's been treating one of his patients for the same complaint for the last five years."

"H'm! Some cure!"

"Talking of cures, did you hear of the remarkable cure of a dumb man through a cycle accident?"

"Through a cycle accident? Impossible! How do you make that out?"

"Why, as he was going along his machine ran away with him down a hill, at the bottom of which it ran against the side wall and was smashed to pieces. The dumb one was hurt rather badly and had received a good shaking, but he got up from the ground and picked up a tyre—and spoke!"

"Clever lad! I say, what are you jazzing about for?"

"Why, you silly chump, you trod on my pet corn."

"Corks! If I had a corn I wouldn't make a pet of it."

"Don't be absurd, or I'll shew you how I knocked spots off Beckett."

"Pooh! You couldn't knock a hole in raspberry jelly."

"Couldn't I? I might tell you I once walked thirty miles to thrash a fellow."

"H'm! And I suppose you walked back, eh?"

"No; they carried me back!"

"What pluck! Now look at me. You'd never think that a time was when I made sixty cannibals run."

"How did you do that?"

"I ran, and they all ran after me!"

"You are indeed a hero! How far can your ancestry be traced?"

"Well, when my grandfather resigned his position as cashier they traced him as far as China, but he got away."

"Does your wife know that?"

"Yes. I make it a rule to tell my wife everything that happens."

"And I tell my wife lots of things that never happen at all."

"Talking of domestic happenings, I can't imagine why you call your place a bungalow."

"Well, if it isn't a bungalow, what is it? The job was a bungle and I still owe for it."

"Yes, and if I remember rightly, you owe me a fiver."

"Didn't I pay it back last week?"

"I don't recollect, old son."

"And you won't recollect it either. You resemble a bad egg."

"Why so?"

"Because you were all right till you were broke."

"Dear, dear! What shocking grammar!"

"My grammar is as good as yours any day."

"Really! Then tell me, would it be correct to say, 'I can't teach you anything?'?"

"Yes, because you can't! But don't worry. I'll pay you that fiver when my shoes wear out."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Well, by that time I'll be well on my feet again!"

"You're a smart fellow. No doubt you know the dodo is extinct. Now, can you name any other bird that's extinct?"

"Certainly. The canary."

"Oh, rats! The canary is not extinct.

"Well, ours is, anyway. The cat ate it this morning!"

"Ha, ha! You're fond of birds, it seems. I suppose you wake up in the morning and listen to the birds singing—eh?"

"Yes: but I've noticed that they always sing melancholy notes in the early morning."

"I wonder why that is?"

"Presumably because their bills all ever dew!"

"That remainds me. You knew old McGoosely? Well, he's gone up the spout."

"You don't say so! Has he met his creditors yet?"

"Yes: he's been in the hospital ever since!"

"But the last time I saw him he said his business was running like clockwork."

"Well, it's been wound up now."

"Cute lad! He must have been an idiot to go bankrupt."

"Not so. He's to be pitied more than an idiot."

"Why so?"

"Because an idiot is only cracked, whereas a bankrupt is broke."

"Why, McGoosely used to spend the best part of his time playing snooker."

"You're wrong. He only played for an hour each day."

"Yes, but he always said that it was the best part of his life."

"He spent twenty years of his sixty in bed, you know."

"Really! What was his complaint?"

"No complaint. He just had his usual eight hours' sleep every day!"

"By the way, I heard that McGoosely once insulted you—ahem!—by offering you a drink."

"It's quite true."

"And didn't you resent the insult?"

"I didn't exactly resent it—I swallowed it!"

"Not so!"

(Continued in next col.)

GIRLS OF TO-DAY.

THE "BARGAIN SALE" GIRL.

A Pre-Spring Poem.

Oh, I am glad, this time of year,
I'm glad that Spring is coming;
I want the sun, I want to hear
The humming-bees a-humming!
I want to see the flowers flow'r,
Their scent and beauty bringing
Excuse me, but I really want
To see the Spring a-springing.

And do you know just why it is
I love the coming season?
Well, if you'll list, I'll tell to you
The plain and honest reason.
'Tis not that then I say good-bye
To colds and coughs, and bunions,
It is because Spring is the time
When I can get Spring onions!

THEIR FIRST CALL.

"Woman has indeed arrived," said Miss Voter to a cynical male. "Why, we have organised a woman's fire brigade in this town."

"I suppose they haven't been called upon to put out any fires yet?"

"Indeed, they have!" was the indignant reply. "They were called out twice last week, and they would have shown the men fire-fighters how to go about work, too, only the first time the captain forgot her best necktie, and the second time the engine broke down outside a milliner's, where there was a sale on, and everything was going dirt cheap, and, of course, most of us got off!"

More Memoirs of Stirnot Homes.

By HIS FRIEND, DR. WHATSON.

III.—AN AVERTED TRAGEDY.

"WHATSON," said Stirnot Homes, suddenly, "we must do something to bring in some 'dough.'"

"We certainly need it," I replied.

The inimitable sleuth looked across at me suspiciously for a moment; but my pun had been an unconscious one, and I kept a straight face.

"Clients are few and far between," continued my illustrious friend, "and you appear to have killed off all your patients. What are we going to do about it?"

At that very instant came the sound of feet upon the stairs, and a few moments later a sharp knock at our door.

"See who it is, Whatson—and, for goodness sake, look as prosperous as you can. It may be a client."

"More likely to be a dun," I observed gloomily.

I was the nearest; it was the landlord of our flat in Baker Street; and I did not in the least like the expression on his face as he accepted my invitation to enter.

"Good-evening, Mr. Bellew," said Homes, heaving himself languidly out of his arm-chair. "I'm glad you blew in. I had thought of coming round to see you at your office to-morrow morning."

"Oh, indeed!" growled Mr. Bellew. "Well, I thought of coming round to see **you**—to-night. See?"

"My sight shows no sign of failing at present, thank you," replied Homes placidly.

"And I want to know, what about it?" continued our landlord, a trifle more loudly.

"What about what?" asked the incomparable detective.

"The rent!" snapped Mr. Bellew.

"Whatson," said Homes, turning to me, "hand Mr. Bellew a chair, and—has that case of whisky arrived yet?"

"What ca——" I began, puzzled for a moment.

"You can't come that with me!" interrupted Mr. Bellew in a nasty tone. "Were you coming round to-morrow with the rent, or what? If so, I'll save you the trouble by relieving you of it now."

"I am sorry to say my intended errand was a far more serious one," murmured Homes. "In the course of my professional inquiries I, to-day, discovered some facts which lead me to believe that your life is threatened, and my intention was to warn you so that you could take suitable precautions."

Mr. Bellew turned pale.

"My—life—threatened?" he repeated shakily.

"That is so," confirmed Homes seriously, and fixing our landlord with a glittering eye. "As you have, of course, realised, there is a woman in it."

Mr. Bellew gasped and sank into a chair.

"Look here, Mr. Homes," he said nervously. "How much do you know?"

My flat-mate allowed one of his inscrutable smiles to flit across his face.

"Mr. Bellew," he said solemnly, "I—know—**all!**"

Mr. Bellew started violently.

"The devil you do!" he gasped. "Then you know——"

Homes raised his hand.

"Don't distress yourself unnecessarily, Mr. Bellew," he said, "by entering into details with me, of which I already am aware. The question is, how are we going to save your life?"

"Save my life!" ejaculated our landlord, starting to his feet.

"Exactly. What is done must be done without delay. Under the seal of professional secrecy I have been made aware of her intentions."

"Only one person can shake her determination," continued the envy of Scotland Yard; "but he, for reasons which you will understand, no doubt, is disinclined to do so. But there is one thing in your favour—he is hard up."

"He is in desperate need. He would listen to reason if it were expressed in terms of Treasury Notes, and, I am convinced, could be prevailed upon to persuade her to abandon her murderous design."

"How much does he want?" asked Mr. Bellew, a gleam of hope in his eye.

"How much have you got?" demanded Homes. "Er—that is to say, how much have you got on you to-night? We must act quickly."

Mr. Bellew fumbled with his wallet and produced notes to the value of twenty pounds.

"It will do for the moment," said Homes, reaching for the money. "He can begin his preparations with this. Let me have the remaining thirty to-morrow, and I will guarantee that he gets her out of the country."

By this time, unnoticed by our terrified visitor, Homes had passed the money to me.

"Whatson," he said, "you might hand Mr. Bellew the rent and take a receipt for it."

When our landlord had stumbled his way down the stairs, I turned to Homes for an explanation.

"Whatson," he said, "you are obtuse. We wanted money. Everybody has a skeleton in their cupboard. I was lucky to hit on Mr. Bellew's. That is all."

"But who is the man who will restrain the woman——?" I began.

"I am!" replied Homes.

"But who is the woman?" I demanded.

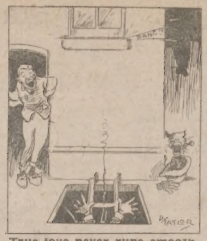
"Mrs. 'Arris!" returned Homes, with a cubbing smile.

ALLY SLOPER'S HALF-HOLIDAY.

The senior clerk was madly in love with the pretty typist. So was the junior.

So the senior plays the Romeo. But the junior knows how the lift works.

So, instead of the senior going up, he goes down.



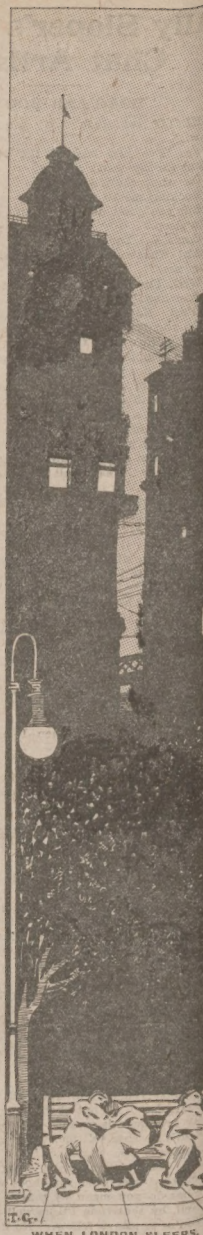
True love never runs smooth. But this time it ran down.

SHE: Has anyone gone for a doctor?
HE: It was the doctor's car that ran over him.
She: How fortunate!

YANK: Say, Bo, what little place is that?
"BO": That's St. Paul's.
YANK: Not very high. I can see a fly walking round the cross.
"BO": Yes; I believe yer; I can 'ear 'is footsteps.

BEAUTY SPECIALIST: For the spring, moddom, eyebrows will be worn high, cheeks sunburnt, while Cupid-bow lips will give way to the passionate.

AFFABLE WAITER: How did you find the steak, sir?
LUNCHER: Oh, quite accidentally. I moved that piece of potato, and there it was underneath!



WHEN LONDON SLEEPS.

"Farewell, we shall meet again."
"Are you going abroad?"
"No; I'm going round to the other of you."

Famous Trials of Two Hundred Years Ago.

(A Series of some of the most atrocious crimes in the annals of English Law.)

7. JOHN VICKARS.

Executed at Ely, November 7th, 1750, for the Murder of His Wife.

THIS unfortunate man appears to have been goaded on to the commission of the rash deed for which he suffered, by the ill conduct of his wife and her mother, hence he, too, though a crime in itself so heinous, cannot be passed over, without one single lamentation on his fate. Though the law cannot take cognizance of our passions, in all cases, yet the best of men have sometimes been driven, in momentary madness, to do a deed which, if not punished for it, has for ever destroyed their peace of mind. So it appears in the case of vicars; whom, we may conclude, had not the law terminated his misery, would never more have tasted the sweet repose of a quiet conscience. While females reflect on the fate of this man, let them resolve to guard against the too free use of their tongues; and let them, however aggravated, endeavour to curb their passions in their resentment.

Amy Hutchinson and John Vicars suffered together, the one for the murder of her husband, the other for destroying his wife; and yet we find different punishments. It has been already observed, that the consuming of the strangled body of a woman for such a crime has been of late years dispensed with, for though it gave not an additional pang, yet it shocked humanity in a ten-fold degree. This part of the sentence of the law was, nevertheless, founded on the well-known part of the Christian system of religion, which says, "That wives should be obedient to their husbands in all things." Hence the law dealt more severely with a woman by deeming her crime petit treason, next in degree to high treason, which is, encompassing the death of the reigning king, who is deemed the common parent of his subjects.

John Vicars' grandfather and father were born at Oxford, and lived in good credit, till misfortunes obliged them to go to Dodington in the Isle of Ely, where he was born. His father dying and leaving him young, and his mother taking a second husband, he had but a slight education: at thirteen he was apprenticed to Mr. J. Aaron, of Holkham, Norfolk, gardener to Thomas Cook, Esq. (later Earl of Leicester), where he served his time faithfully; and was employed in the gardens, till an intrigue with a married woman obliged him to leave that place; and having a recommendation to Mr. Bridgman, gardener at Kensington Place, he went and worked some time there, and then engaged himself to Captain Duroy, of the "Exeter" man-of-war, and served him about nine months, and being paid off, assisted in a party of smugglers about a year, and being taken prisoner with others by a Custom House smack, near Rye, was committed to the new gaol in Southwark, tried and acquitted by the indulgence of the court.

Falling into company with one Anne Eason, he made love to her and married her. They lived for seven years very happily, but had no children: about that time she began to be very much afflicted with illness, which altered her temper so much, that it occasioned frequent uneasiness between them, and gave him such disgust that he enlisted in the Duke of Bedford's Regiment as a six months' man, where he continued about a year, and then came to his wife again and lived with her till her death, which happened about twelve months later. He continued a widower about a year, in which time, observing one Mary Hoinsworth to keep a great deal of company, he asked her one evening if they were all her sweethearts; she replied no. He then offered himself, met with great encouragement, and from that time says he was refused no favours, but had no intention of marriage, nor did he promise any such thing. They continued a criminal familiarity for a fortnight, all which time she pressed him to marry her. He told her there was no occasion for her to be in such a hurry; but she replied she was with child; and if he would not marry her she would get a warrant and force him. He said he should not care to be forced to do anything against his will; on which she replied if he would not marry her she would certainly make away with herself. He then kept away for two or three nights to see how she would behave. In the meantime came a hackney coachman to town, with whom she seemed to be very much taken, that a woman who worked in his garden told him that he had lost his sweetheart. He said he was glad of that, thinking he had a good riddance, but he was not so fortunate. For two or three nights after this the coachman left the place, on which she flung herself in his way, and, he was so simple as to renew their former acquaintance, but not on the score of marriage, which she well knew, and agreed readily to keep him company: but after two or three nights she threatened him again with a warrant if he would not marry her. At last, his affections growing stronger, on her repeated assurance that she would make him a careful and industrious wife, he unfortunately married her: but not until he had earnestly desired that if there was any other person for whom she had a greater respect than himself, she would consider it, for when once married it would be too late. This unhappy woman had learned the glover's business, which she followed, and they lived very lovingly for about two months: but after that time, he says, words frequently arose between them, occasioned by her adhering to bad advice given her by her mother and others, by some of whom, she owned to him, she was advised to poison him. From words they came to blows, to which she provoked him, though he entreated her to forbear. At length she went away from him to live with her mother, and, notwithstanding the most earnest entreaties, refused to return. One day, going by her mother's house with some fruit, and seeing his wife there, he went in and offered her some fruit and forced a kiss from her, desiring to be reconciled; her mother came in, and after giving loose to her tongue in a virulent manner, fell to beating him, swearing she would kill him, and advising his wife, who had a knife in her hand, to stab him; he rolled her off, and getting up, found his thumb cut, a hole in his shirt, and the skin ruffled, then thinking himself in great danger, went home. But his mother-in-law and his wife swore the peace against him, and had a warrant to take him up. Upon April 24, therefore, to prevent their serving it, he went to a gentleman's about three miles from Whittlesea, to beg his advice, which was to make a bill of sale of goods and go off. He resolved to do so and came back to Whittlesea, about six o'clock the same evening. By the way, on seeing his wife in the new shop which her mother had provided for her, his heart beat with love for her; but on the thoughts of her obstinacy, and that his life or ruin was what they aimed at, by laying him in gaol, then it was his resentment which got the better of his reason. Stepping into the shop where she was sitting at work, and placing his left arm under her chin (he apprehended she thought he was going to kiss her), and drawing his knife out of his pocket with his other hand, he made an attempt to cut her throat, but was prevented by her putting her hands up when she felt the knife. He then placed the point of the knife under her left ear, the back part upward, and stuck it downward as they stick sheep. She once cried, "Murder!" He said, "Molly, 'tis now too late, you should have been ruled in time." He then ran into the street and called out for somebody to take him prisoner, but everyone was afraid; on which he threatened if they did not, he would do more mischief; on which, one Thomas Boone taking hold of his arm, he surrendered himself; but appeared as a lunatic till next day, when he was very calm. This account was signed by himself, and it being reported that he had committed more murders, he further desired it might be explained as follows:

"While he was gardener to R. Man, Esq., the garden was often robbed, on which his master set him to watch one night, armed with a gun and a hanger, and fixed a trap at the supposed place of entrance. The thief came, and soon saw reason to run off; but Vicars cut him in the leg with his hanger; besides which he was so unfortunate as to be taken in the trap, the teeth of which reaching about the middle of his body, struck into him, so that being carried before a justice and committed to Maidstone Gaol, he soon after died of his wounds; but this I apprehend (says he) cannot be deemed a murder."

While in prison he said he dearly loved his wife, but her provocation was so great that he could not let her live, nor live without her, he first intending to kill himself also. He persisted in it, that he should do the same again, on such provocation, though he injured many in the same way without reluctance.

Vicars at the tree behaved very steadily, but penitent, praying with the minister, and singing Psalm the 6th, which he chose, and joined also in Hutchinson's Psalm (LI.).

———)o(———

LOVE IS (ALMOST) BLIND.

Mother: Mabel, I was very much surprised and shocked when I passed the parlour door and found Horace Woodbine with his face close to yours.

Mabel: Yes, ma, isn't it a shame the poor fellow's so awfully near-sighted?

———)o(———

MINT SAUCE.

The inmates of the Mint the other day were indulging in a little persiflage. After the usual jokes about the Bradburys and Fishers, the Scales tried its time-worn joke on the Bullion Ingot—"Well, you've your weight in gold, anyway."

"Yes," replied the B. I, "and yet I suppose pretty soon I'll be hard pressed for coin."

———)o(———

ROUGH ON WILLIAM.

"Ah," said the sentimental clerk of St. Paul's Churchyard, as he emerged from the Cathedral, "don't you wish you could write like Shakespeare?"

"Not likely," replied the bookkeeper.

"You don't? Why?"

"I'd get the sack. Did you ever see Shakespeare's signature?"

———)o(———

HOW TO ENJOY OPERA.

Gertrude: Did you enjoy yourself at the opera last night?

Angela: Oh, tremendously. Mr. Gaffit is the most delightful conversationalist I have ever attended a musical performance with!

For ourselves, we think that the average theatre would be a decent place to sleep in if the people on the stage did not make such a noise. That's why we prefer a kinema.

BROTHER (after the third spill)): I say, you know, you kids! we must put up a better show than this or those people will take us for a lot of jolly amateurs.

WASTED ENERGY.

"Balmy?" he queried. "Of course I am balmy. What we need in this world is some system of general thought transference, or mind reading. You know how hard I worked to win Maggie? Just gave all my day and night to the subject, neglected my business, and all that, and just made a fool of myself generally."

"But you succeeded."

"Oh, yes, we're engaged. And now that we have exchanged confidences, I find that she was working just as hard to get me, and it makes us both mad to think of the waste of effort."

ALLY SLOPER'S HALF-HOLIDAY.

"Ah! They be main good-'earted chaps in Lunnon. I went into a barber's to 'ave a 'air-cut, and barber ast me would I 'ave a champagne."

A SAUCY PUSS!

APPEARANCES ARE DECIEVING.

SO NEAR, AND YET SO FAR

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